Review

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 15, No. 356 (Oct. 1, 1872), p. 629

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3352839>

Accessed: 13-03-2015 19:53 UTC

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will include "St. Paul" (Mendelssohn), "Paradise and the Peri" (Schumann), "The May Queen" (Sir W. S. Bennett), "Te Deum" (Sullivan), &c. The solo instrumental works to be performed for the first time at these concerts will be Concerto in B flat Mozart (his last); Rondo in B flat (Beethoven) (posthumous), and Concerto in D minor (Rubinstein). The performances will be, as usual, under the able conductorship of Herr Manns.

THE St. George's Glee Union gave its monthly concert on the 6th ult.; an interesting feature of the entertainment being the skilful performance of Mons. Alfred Noyer on the "Violin Piano," an instrument seemingly capable of producing the combined effects of violins and violoncellos. The selections performed by Mons. Noyer were a Fantasia "Caprice," and "Etude de Concert," both his own composition. Mr. Hallett, R.A.M. (pianist), ably supplied the place of Miss Julia Angarde (absent from indisposition). Several vocal pieces were given with much effect by Miss Horder, Miss Clara Buley, Mr. T. Jekyll, and Miss Janet King, many of which were encored. Sir H. Bishop's glee, "Where art thou, beam of light?" "Ye spotted snakes (Stevens)," and "Hail, smiling morn" (Spofforth) were very fairly given by the members of the choir. Mr. C. Messenger officiated as conductor, in the absence of Mr. Garside.

A SPLENDID time-piece (value 11 guineas) was recently presented by the Members of St. Paul's Choral Society to their much respected late Conductor, Mr. George Shinn. The time-piece, which was made by Messrs. Smith and Sons, of Clerkenwell, is very elegant, with visible scapement and black marble case inlaid with malachite, and bears, on a silver plate, the following inscription:—"Presented to Geo. Shinn, Esq., late Organist of St. Paul's, Islington, by the Members of St. Paul's Choral Society, as an expression of their esteem and regard. Sept. 1872." The presentation took place in the school-room connected with the church, after which the members retired to the house of Mr. Robinson, St. Paul's-road, by whom they were most kindly and generously entertained, and where music, both vocal and instrumental, formed an agreeable termination to the evening's proceedings.

THE prospectus of the Brixton Choral Society announces that the season of 1872-3 will commence on Monday, the 7th inst. The list of works to be performed includes Handel's "Acis and Galatea," Mendelssohn's "Elijah," W. H. Cummings's "Fairy Ring," F. H. Cowen's "Rose Maiden," and Sir Julius Benedict's "Richard Cœur-de-Lion." The Society continues under the conductorship of Mr. W. Lemare, who deserves the utmost credit for the ability he has displayed in training the choir to its present state of efficiency.

MR. RIDLEY PRENTICE announces that the next series of Monthly Popular Concerts at Brixton will commence on the 22nd inst., at the Angell Town Institution. With the view of making these musical entertainments a permanent institution, a number of gentlemen have formed themselves into a committee; and we have little doubt that by these means an increased subscription-list will speedily be obtained. The prospectus states that by strictly adhering to the performance of works by the best masters, the high character which these concerts have acquired will be steadily maintained.

Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

A Morning, Communion and Evening Service in D. Set to music by C. Hubert H. Parry.

THIS work evinces a strong musical feeling and a high degree of musicianship; but it embodies the strange contradiction of grammatical purity—almost without an exception—with incongruity of form. It contains some admirable ideas, which are remarkable as much for melodic interest as for the unacknowledged and often beautiful harmony that enforces this. We will not draw attention from the many larger merits of the composition, by numbering its very few harmonic slips which, doubtless, Mr. Parry can find out for himself, and of which no one else would be edified to hear; but we must give some little discussion to the graver failings in technical design. The powerful resource for a Church composer, the appropriate use of which we have many a time commended, the resource of repeating a musical phrase to some second passage of the text, which phrase has been previously set to some earlier passage, is here employed with sometimes good effect, but sometimes, too, without any apparent meaning, and with a result that is little short

of tiresome. The value of this resource is, firstly, that when well applied, it is a great aid in the construction of a movement, since conducing to that ever welcome effect, the recurrence of a subject with which the hearer has already been made familiar; its value is, secondly, that in reminding one of the words to which it was first set, it makes these words in some sort illustrate those to which it is repeated. Happy instances of this latter are where the phrase originally set to the initial words of the *Gloria* recurs at "Glory be to the Father," in the two numbers of the Evening Service. Again, in the *Benedictus*, where the same idea appears for the Doxology, which is set to the repeated "holy" in the *Te Deum*. Once more, in the same number, where the music to "Blessed be the Lord," is set also to "the tender mercy of our God," making this latter passage reflect the feeling of the opening, and suggest the thought that we bless the Lord *because* of His tender mercy; and yet further still, in the same canticle, where "we being delivered," in like manner, refers to the phrase for "O Lord, save Thy people," in the *Te Deum*. These are thoughtful, even poetical, and they cannot be unimportant to the hearer in leading him to a clear, and sometimes novel, perception of the purport of the text and its beauty. On the other hand, the five times use of the Church phrase, wherewith the *Te Deum* opens, grows worse than monotonous, for it frets into fragments the grand theme of universal praise, and makes this wearisome. Then the author takes no advantage, in his technical design, of this resource of returning to a foretold subject; the ideas recur when the keys have been already long established wherein they re-appear, and there is no obvious ground for coming back to them instead of introducing new matter, so that their illustrative value is weakened by their needlessness in the tonal construction. On this head the many full closes in the key of D that disfigure almost every number, but especially the *Benedictus*, show that the author has much, if not everything, to learn with respect to form, and to learn also that this grand necessity in a work of art is quite as indispensable in a vocal, as in an instrumental composition, in one to sacred as to secular words.

The work is, for the most part, written for voices in unison, or, to speak more accurately, in octaves, but this arrangement is occasionally broken by their separation into harmony; and the organ part, save where, with capital effect, it occasionally leaves them entirely alone, ably supports even where it is totally independent of them, a good example of which is in the beginning of the *Magnificat*. It is injudicious, because useless, to assign the low A (second space in the bass) to the tenors, as in the very opening phrase of the *Te Deum*; and still more so to write the low D (below the first ledger line) for the basses. A little experience will cure the talented composer of such indiscretion, who generally disposes well his parts for the several voices, and always with a view to their good effect. Of all the numbers, our preference rests on the *Nunc Dimittis*, which is somewhat more complicated than the others—that is, through the first sentence the two upper voices follow the others in canon; but it is not for the sake of this complexity that we admire it, since the thoughts of which it consists, be they simple or involved, are all admirable. The series of pieces presents many beauties, and is extremely interesting, as exhibiting natural ability very far above the common type; let the author cultivate his gifts from nature in a good school, for they should enrich the world with noble fruit.

Original Compositions for the Organ. By E. Silas.

HERE are five books of various extent, containing each a single composition. They come from the hand of an artist whose powers were formed by good schooling, and have been matured by constant practice; yes, formed, for even when nature gives the mental elements of fancy and invention these are but little better than worthless for art uses until they are knit into order by judicious training. A class of writers upon art—upon musical art especially—pretends that the old principles are exhausted; that it is pedantry to submit to their fetters; that imagination is free; and that true genius can only be directed by its impulse. This wild pretence is refuted by a comparison of music, written under its conditions, with that of composers who feel the principles of art to be the inexhaustible principles of nature—who feel these to be not fetters but guides—who feel that the freedom would be recklessness of the imagination if not guarded by order—and who improve the suggestions rather than yield to the impulses of this faculty, which may be either misleading or god-like.

No. 1 in F consists of an *Allegro moderato*, an extensive fugal episode in an accelerated tempo, and a resumption